

7 March 1936

Sermione.

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My Dearest Little Mother,

You are treating your "eldest and newest" child very badly, and I am worried for fear you might be ill. Did you get the last letter I sent, thanking you for the photographs which you so kindly sent me, and returning the pictures of Copperkins?

I dont know if you read in the papers that my father died about a month ago. I heard from his great friend, Dr Julius Friend, who told me what had happened. Then for a fortnight, in spite of telegrams of sympathy and letters ^{which sent} not a word. Then another letter saying how badly off the widow was left, and I sent a small cheque which was all I could afford. Since then not a word acknowledging it.

A long letter which came just before I sent the cheque from Mary-- the widow, telling me that my father had been very well the previous evening, and then during the night got up complaining of a pain at his heart. He fell down and was dead when she reached him. Then of course the notices in the paper brought me letters and letters- people who read my books, and sent sympathy. Very, very difficult to answer.

Its no good my pretending to you, darling, that it matters much to me, is it? I felt very badly about the way he behaved after my Dear Mother left me, and he has never sent me a line since. SHE^{the widow} is a kindly little soul, and has always been very nice to me in every way. She said in her letter to me,

" I never heard your father say one bad word against your mother." I couldn't help thinking, as Gracie Fields sings,

" Good reason for this." How could he? However, she sent me a large number of beautifully photographs of My Dear One which he had always kept in a locked private drawer. I think that in his own selfish way he did love her, and that he probably looked back with regret on the past, but he was a self centered man, and a selfish one, and I doubt how much anything really MATTERED to him, except rather sentimentally.

I wonder if you remember the name of the man you once said was the only man in Ripon worthy of her? I ask because Muriel told me that for the last week before she left us she continually spoke of someone and asked when he was coming, and how he was, and evidently Muriel said- though that she WAS married to him. Was his name Walter, do you remember? If so he is now a Bank Manager in Ripon, I think.

It is most beautiful here now, Spring is really with us, and everything is blooming, and the grass the most brilliant emerald imaginable. Do you by *any* chance remember a boy called Pearse, who was a Cho~~ix~~ister at the Cathedral and was at the school? He wrote to me the other day. I think I told you that I heard quite often from Willie D~~ox~~in, who's father was one of the Aldermen and had an ironmongers shop.

Such good letters he writes too. Also Mabel Cawthorne, who was Frank Smith's daughter. Also Mrs William Mawson who lived at Bondgate House, right at the bottom opposite to where Mr Wilkinson used to live. She has been my dear friend for amny many years, and I love her dearly. She has just gone to Ripon to stay with the Oxleys at the Minster House. Do you remember the big house which stood near the Minster. I remember they always had a large GONG rung for Luncheon, and as Admiral Oxley was not ~~orin~~o^sly mean, My Mother used to laugh and say, "There's the Oxley's mutton chop going in!"

I cant spell this afternoon, its beca~~use~~ I am tired, and want a rest. So you will forgive all the errors, and write to me- one of your REAL letters please, or I shall be jealous of Muriel! My dearest love to you, and God bless and keep

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you well always---

Ever Your own loving,

Nasmi.